

PARAMOUNT - Working to make college an achievable goal for every student, Congresswoman Linda Sánchez hosted “Thinking Ahead to College” on Saturday, November 15th 2003. 165 middle school students and parents from the Lynwood, Paramount and South Gate areas attended the program, where they received information and resources they need to succeed at the college level.

“Today, more than 60 percent of all jobs require more than a High School diploma. The kind of education you get will determine what type of job you will have, your level of job satisfaction, and how much you will make. I organized this event to help our students plan ahead so they can get the benefits of a college education,” Congresswoman Linda Sánchez said.

Held at Paramount High School, “Thinking Ahead to College” featured three panels designed to give students and parents important information on the courses they need to take, the programs available to help them succeed, and the funding options to help make a college education possible.

The first panel, “Think about college and the future,” provided a broad overview of college preparation, the value of a college education, and how to get involved in college preparation programs. “College preparation at the high school” educated students about high school coursework and activities that can help prepare them for higher education. Finally, “Motivation from college students and their parents” brought in current college students to share their personal stories about their college experience, the barriers they had to overcome, and what middle school students can learn from their experience.

“While all our presenters did a great job of stressing the important of a college education, I was especially moved by the personal stories of college students who have overcome the odds to get a college education. I hope that students looking ahead to college can learn from their experiences,” said Sánchez.

“Thinking Ahead to College” was presented in conjunction with the Gateway Cities Partnership, the California State University at Long Beach, and the University of Southern California. Academic enrichment programs such as the Mathematics, Engineering, Science Achievement (MESA) and the Early Academic Outreach Program (EAOP) were also on hand to encourage students to take advantage of their resources as they look ahead to a college education.

“I want to thank the presenters and organizations for helping make “Thinking Ahead to College” a success. Your valuable insight will help make going to college a reachable goal for students in our community,” Sánchez said.